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TBK

TIEDTKE - BÜHLING - KINNE & PARTNER (GbR)

TBK-Patent, Bavariaring 4-6, 80336 München, Tel.: +49 89 544690, Fax: +49 89 532611 (G3) +49 89 5329095 (G3+G4), postoffice@tbk-patent.de

TBK-Patent POB 20 19 18 80019 München

PRV Interpat

Box 5055

102 42 Stockholm
SCHWEDEN

Patentanwälte

Dipl.-Ing. Reinhard Kinne
Dipl.-Ing. Hans-Bernd Pellmann
Dipl.-Ing. Klaus Grams
Dipl.-Ing. Aurel Vollnals
Dipl.-Ing. Thomas J.A. Leson
Dipl.-Ing. Dr. Georgi Chivarov
Dipl.-Ing. Matthias Grill
Dipl.-Ing. Alexander Kühn
Dipl.-Ing. Rainer Böckelen
Dipl.-Ing. Stefan Klingele
Dipl.-Chem. Stefan Bühlung
Dipl.-Ing. Ronald Roth
Dipl.-Ing. Jürgen Faller
Dipl.-Ing. Hans-Ludwig Trösch
Rechtsanwälte
Michael Zöbisch

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Applicant: Nokia Corporation

(Frist: 12.7. Eing.)

Reference is made to the Written Opinion dated February 12, 2004.

It is presently intended to maintain claims 1 to 46 as filed for the further prosecution of the application.

As acknowledged by the Examiner in the Written Opinion, the subject matters of independent claims 1, 14, 27, 41, 42, and 43 are definitely novel in comparison to the relevant prior art.

However, the Examiner's opinion regarding the inventiveness of the claimed subject matter is respectfully contradicted.

It is agreed that one difference between the subject matter of the present invention and the method and system described in document EP 1 156 623 (referred to hereinafter as reference D1) is the provision of a decision functionality about roaming of the terminal outside of the terminal, i.e. into the network side. Such a "centralized" processing of the roaming decision based on a load

Dresdner Bank, München	Kto. 3939 844	BLZ 700 800 00	IBAN-Nr.: DE47 7008 0000 0393 9844 00	BIC : DRES DE FF 700
Deutsche Bank, München	Kto. 2861 060	BLZ 700 700 24	IBAN-Nr.: DE14 7007 0024 0286 1060 00	BIC : DEUT DE DB MUC
Postbank, München	Kto. 6704 3804	BLZ 700 100 80	IBAN-Nr.: DE04 7001 0080 0067 0438 04	BIC : PBNK DE FF
Mizuho Corp. Bank, Düsseldorf	Kto. 810 423 3007	BLZ 300 207 00	IBAN-Nr.: DE75 3002 0700 8104 2330 07	BIC : MHCB DE DD
UFI Bank Limited, Düsseldorf	Kto. 500 047	BLZ 301 307 00	IBAN-Nr.: DE09 3013 0700 0000 5000 47	BIC : SANW DE DX
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balancing function offers the advantage that, in comparison to the conventional processing in the terminal side according to reference D1, an increased amount of information is available for the roaming decision (see, for example, page 34, first paragraph, of the description). The reason for this is that by this structure the whole network can be monitored which includes also other subscriber terminals than the one for which the roaming decision is to be made. This kind of information gain is not achievable by the system according to reference D1.

It is not obvious to the person skilled in the art to modify the system structure of reference D1 in such a way as defined in the present independent claims, i.e. that the decision function is placed from the terminal to the network side. First of all, the person skilled in the art would realise that such a modification usually results in a higher calculating capability requirement at the access point (i.e. higher costs for the AP device) as well as in a higher signalling traffic load at the terminal/AP interface (data are sent first from the AP to the terminal and then back from the terminal to the AP, while reference D1 describes only the transmission from the AP to the terminal). The skilled person would normally avoid such changes since they are against the normal development targets (lower costs, less traffic load). Thus, the solution provided by the invention would not be an obvious way for him to modify the system described in reference D1. Additionally, reference D1 is completely silent about any possibility to move away the decision function from the terminal side.

Hence, the present invention also involves the required inventive step since the person skilled in the art could not be inspired by the prior art in such a way that the subject matter of the independent claims 1, 14, 27, 41, 42, and 43 could become obvious to him without requiring an inventive activity.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that the claimed invention distinguishes over the cited prior art and defines patentable subject matter.

Thus, the Examiner is asked to reconsider her previous opinion and to indicate the allowability of the present claims.

Ronald Roth
Patentanwalt
TBK-Patent